

CLAIMS

1. A mask for a lane marker on a road surface that has a visual appearance; the mask comprising:
  - 5           a section of masking material having an upper surface and a lower surface; and  
          a visible image disposed on the upper surface of the section of masking material; the visible image adapted to simulate the visual appearance of the road surface where the lane marker is disposed.
- 10   2. The mask of claim 1, wherein the visible image is printed on the upper surface of the section of masking material.
3. The mask of claim 2, wherein the visible image is printed from a photograph of the road surface disposed adjacent the location of the lane marker to be masked.
- 15   4. The mask of claim 3, wherein the photograph is a digital photograph.
5. The mask of claim 1, further comprising an adhesive disposed on the lower surface of the section of masking material.
- 20   6. The mask of claim 5, further comprising a layer of top coating material, disposed over the visible image on the section of masking material.
7. The mask of claim 6, further comprising anti-skid particles disposed in the layer of top coating.
- 25   8. The mask of claim 1, wherein the upper surface of the section of masking material is smooth.
- 30   9. The mask of claim 1, wherein the section of masking material is 100 percent polyester plain weave.

10. A method for creating a mask for a lane marker on a road surface wherein the road surface has a visual appearance; the method comprising the steps of:

(a) photographing the visual appearance of the road surface adjacent the location of the lane markers to be masked;

5 (b) printing at least a portion of the photograph on a section of masking material; and

(c) using the masking material to mask a lane marker on the road surface.

11. The method of claim 10, further comprising the step of using a digital camera in  
10 step (a) and transmitting the digital photograph to the printer that is used to perform step (b).

12. The method of claim 10, wherein step (c) includes the step of applying a top coating to the section of masking material.

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13. The method of claim 12, wherein step (c) includes the step of applying an adhesive to the lower surface of the section of masking material.

14. The method of claim 12, wherein step (c) further includes the step of applying  
20 anti-skid particles to the top coating.

15. A method for creating a lane marker mask; the method comprising the steps of:  
(a) photographing a plurality of different road surfaces to create a plurality of road surface images;

25 (b) creating a plurality of lane marker masks with each of the lane marker masks having an upper surface with each of the upper surfaces having a visual image; the visible images adapted to simulate the road surface images created in step (a);

(c) publishing the plurality of images created in step (a); and

(d) offering the plurality of lane marker masks for sale that were created in step  
30 (b).

16. The method of claim 15, wherein step (c) includes the step of publishing the images on a web site that is accessible through a wide area network.

5 17. The method of claim 15, wherein step (c) includes the step of publishing the images in a printed catalog.